HUMAN EVENTS

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News Section

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Nixon as Santa Claus: Over the Yuletide cocktails of what is an unusually festive Christmas season, people in the know are laughing over the White House crowd's latest coup. According to these accounts, the Palace Guard thought up the visit of the Vice President to Austria as a special Christmas "stunt" — combining all the Madison Avenue requirements of "good press visibility" and "good timing" to meet the humanitarian sentiments of the holidays. But the most amazing aspect of the matter — according to the raconteurs — is that the publicity directors neglected to consult Nixon in advance. Indeed, the latter reportedly was highly astonished when he heard the news over the radio.

While it was obvious to the Vice President — as well as to others — that he could scarcely accomplish anything to ease the unhappiness and discomforts of the refugees, nevertheless he is a "good sport" and a "good soldier," and willing to exert himself in any move which looks helpful.

But, it should be added, the rather sketchy planning of the White House manipulators omitted consideration of several matters. State Department people immediately warned that a visit to the hard-pressed Austrian Government representatives should be made, inasmuch as the visit of the No. 2 Executive of the U.S. might embarrass Vienna, which fears Russian military forces across the border. This was done.

Then, the top-level people began to worry about the personal security of such an important man in an area so near the bloodshed and hazards of a country in revolution. One awesome consideration could not be avoided: that if Nixon should be killed Eisenhower's legal successor would be a Democrat, Sam Rayburn. According to the Presidential succession law of 1946, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, no matter what his party affiliation, succeeds the President if there is no Vice President. While Eisenhower seems quite well just now, the Palace Guard would apparently rather not gamble on a heartbeat. All this explains the extraordinary preparations of the Austrian Government and the prudent plans of the American directors of the Nixon tour to guard him from any unnecessary dangers.

Inside State Department: In the wake of the appointment of Governor Herter as Under Secretary of State, State Department circles are using the term "purge" to describe what is under way and likely to affect many important jobs. It is believed that such important figures as Loy Henderson and Robert Murphy are due to be shifted from their present key positions after the Governor takes over.

Indeed, there is one story — vouched for by many close observers, although denied by others — that suggests Herbert Hoover, Jr. (whom Herter will replace) was eased out himself and not altogether voluntarily. According to this account, Hoover, instead of requesting the White House to accept his resignation, actually had decided to stay on for another year. He had one of his aides relay this news to Secretary Dulles, to Senators Knowland and Bridges, and to Senator Green (head of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate).

The aide was astonished when Senator Green (who has the reputation of a very canny bettor) replied, "I'll bet you he doesn't stay on," and proceeded to say that he had heard from good sources that Hoover would not serve but would be replaced by someone else. In some astonishment, the aide queried Secretary Dulles about the matter. Dulles called the "Southern White House" in Augusta and found that the Green story was correct. The White House, it seems, had recalled how Hoover several times in the past year talked about resigning, took his remarks seriously, and had arranged with Herter to assume the position.

One Man's Welcome: George Meany, head of the AFL-CIO, speaking at the Overseas Press Club last week, said he wanted to meet Premier Nehru and "tell him to his face" that the Premier is an

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"agent of the Soviet Union." His sentiment finds some applause among the many in the Capital who are not altogether happy about the Indian leader's visit. But so far, no reports confirm that any such meeting or startling conversation passed between Nehru and Meany.

East of the Danube: Foreign diplomats here, in discussing Russo-Polish relations, emphasize that Moscow had to take a very conciliatory attitude towards the national Communist, Premier Gomulka — which emphasizes the none-too-strong position of the Kremlin. They make the following points:

(1) Gomulka, it is true, is a dyed-in-the-wool Communist. But he has been in bad odor with the Kremlin for some years and was recently released from prison. He is obviously regarded as quite "unreliable" in Moscow — as much so as Marshal Tito. In short, the masters in Moscow's capital were ready to pay a big price for keeping Poland from going the way of Hungary.

(2) There have been many concessions made to the Roman Catholic Church since Gomulka's accession to power. The Church had for years been persecuted by his predecessors. This yielding suggests, on the surface, merely a recognition of the big role the Church plays in Poland. But, diplomats remark, the Catholic Church, of course, is a power there, but not *that powerful*. The fact is that (as explained in HUMAN EVENTS on October 27, 1956) Polish nationalism has become fused with a new and reinforced allegiance to the Church. The wily Moscow directors perceived this truth and made concessions to keep down the lid of the growing Polish nationalism.

(3) One tale they tell in the chanceries along Massachusetts Avenue lights up the low esteem in which the stability of the Khrushchev-Bulganin Government is held. It is related that in October, when the Polish ferment was at its height, the Kremlin asked its Marshal Rokossovsky (commander in Poland), whether he could effectively stamp out the revolt (which put in Gomulka) by brute force. His answer was in the affirmative, and there were many in the Kremlin who believed his estimate of the situation was sound.

Why, then, did Moscow put aside the Marshal's advice and proceed to appease the revolutionary elements in Poland by installing Gomulka? The reason — according to the diplomatic dopesters — is that "B and K" feared that Rokossovsky might emerge as the "strong man" of Russia, to their own elimination. Whatever the accuracy of this size-up of the situation, it does reveal how ticklish the internal power situation in the Kremlin is regarded by professional observers.

BOUND VOLUMES for 1956 — indexed — may now be ordered for March delivery. Regular price, $15; **pre-publication price, accepted until December 31, $7.50 each.** A few indexed bound volumes for 1955 are available at $15. None available for previous years.

Senate: The Governorship of Rhode Island has been held by a Democrat ever since 1940. This week, the State Board of Elections finished counting absentee ballots, found the winner of the 1956 gubernatorial election to be Christopher Del Sesto, onetime leading Democrat in the state, but now an ardent Republican.

Theodore Francis Green, senior Senator from that state, marked his 89th birthday anniversary last October 2. He is spry, hale, and hearty, a minor wonder of the era. But as spry, hale and hearty as he may be, insurance actuarial tables do not indicate a further long life for anyone in his 90th year.

Any Senate vacancy can be filled temporarily through appointment by the Governor of the state involved. After January 1, the Governor of Rhode Island will be Republican Del Sesto.

Reports are current that Democratic leaders have suggested an immediate resignation to their party's West Virginia Senator, Matthew M. Neely, who has spent much time in hospitals in recent weeks and who, they fear, may be compelled to spend more time away from the Senate than in it during the next session. Neely is said to have flatly rejected the suggestions.

The present Governor of West Virginia is a Democrat, but a Republican, Cecil Underwood, takes over January 1.

One other Democratic Senator — Chavez of New Mexico — from a state whose Governor is a Republican, is also reportedly in uncertain health.

A single switch of a Senate seat from Democrat to Republican would allow the GOP to organize the Chamber, with a 48-48 tie and Vice President Nixon casting the deciding vote.

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All this is why GOP Senate leaders are discussing whether they should try to put the Senate Republican Conference on record, as a matter of party policy, as determined to take control if such an opportunity should arise.

Labor Front: New proposals bob up for revision of the much-discussed but never-changed Taft-Hartley law.

Secretary of Labor James P. Mitchell lets word leak out that the Administration is considering several proposals for strengthening the law's provision for anti-strike injunctions in disputes imperilling the national welfare. Observers are rather incredulous, until they see the actual proposals, because of Mitchell's pro-union attitude in the past.

One such plan is said to allow leeway in timing such injunctions. The law presently provides for a Presidential Board to report findings, with the Attorney General empowered to seek a Federal court injunction on the basis of that report. Such an injunction lasts for 80 days; after that, the President has no further recourse to prevent a strike. The plan now being discussed would permit the injunction to be set aside if an agreement is reached, but then brought back into force for the remainder of the 80 days if a new strike should occur despite the agreement.

Consideration of this subject is a direct outgrowth of the East Coast dock strike of the International Longshoremen's Association. A Taft-Hartley injunction brought the dockers back to work last month; but if no agreement has been reached by February 12, when the injunction expires (and there are no signs of one) the ILA, under present law, will be free to walk out again for as long as it chooses.

One strong deterrent to any Administration proposals along this line will be fear that with this as a starter, Congress might take the bit in its teeth and pass other amendments imposing stronger regulations on unions than the Administration desires. A dock strike preventing vital oil shipments to Europe might well create such a runaway atmosphere in Congress.

Adlai Again: In connection with the lively split between Democratic "liberals" and the conservative Southerners in that party, observers here note that Adlai is coming in for some rather severe criticism on the conduct of the recent election campaign. This has more significance than just mere rancor at a defeated leader and the natural desire to make him the goat. It stems from a growing feeling among some Democrats that there's something wrong with the whole crowd of New Dealers and "eggheads" in that party.

Public relations experts here, in an election "post-mortem," have been reporting opinion from press and politicos that "some other Democratic candidate" than Stevenson would have been better; that the Adlai public relations efforts were much inferior to those of the other candidates (Nixon, Kefauver and Eisenhower); that Hagerty of the Ike camp deserves "A-plus" while Stevenson should receive no more than a "D-minus." One of the experts, Ludwig Caminata, Jr., of Washington, emphasized that "candidate Stevenson trailed a bad fourth. He had a staff that was either unable or unwilling for a variety of reasons to provide continuing good service to news media."

The testimony of one press association reporter, who traveled on the Adlai train, is significant: "Before joining Stevenson [on his train], I felt he would make a good President, if by some miracle he could be elected. After traveling with him and his incredible crew of eggheads, I concluded that this same outfit would be put into key jobs if he won . . . and that if Stevenson couldn't organize a decent campaign, how could he be expected to organize the Presidency?"

Some of the comment on this public relations discussion on Adlai mentions that Stevenson had no one equal to Hagerty. "His [Hagerty's] counterpart with the Stevenson organization, Clayton Fritchey, spent most of his time with Stevenson, rarely saw reporters and even then had little to add or offer . . . his failure as a news secretary resulted in great personal disservice to Stevenson." Fritchey is the one who is reputed to be responsible for Adlai's wild speeches of the closing days of the campaign, now admitted to have done the candidate inestimable harm.

Tito: It was reported in *The New York Times* Monday that Yugoslavia's Tito will shortly be invited to visit Washington. The Tito trip, seen as a further step down the road to appeasement, comes as no surprise to HUMAN EVENTS. As far back as May 19, 1956, during the visit of Indonesia's Sukarno, HUMAN EVENTS said:

> **"Sukarno will be followed — it is expected — by Moscow's satellite Nehru of India; then next in line will be the Com-**

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munist dictator of Yugoslavia, Marshal Tito; and finally, if by that time American resistance is sufficiently weakened — Khrushchev and Bulganin themselves, who have been seeking an invitation to visit America."

All but the last phase of this intelligence estimate have now been realized.

Election Final: Statisticians in the Capital, surveying the official vote returns last week, conclude that talk of a "record" vote is hollow indeed. Eisenhower's winning percentage of 57.3 was considerably under popular landslide totals of previous elections (see HUMAN EVENTS for November 3, 1956) although his "electoral" victory was lopsided. Contrary to previous calculations of the experts, the total vote in the recent election exceeded that of 1952 — barely. This increase, although claimed as a "record," does not take into account the fact that between elections America's adult population increased by almost four million — from 98,135,000 to 102,000,000. This means that the percentage turnout of America's civilian voting population fell from 62.7 to 60.4 — hardly a "record."

The Mourners' Bench: These are the days when the "liberal experts" on Russia and communism eat crow. The almost solid wall of official "experts" on those subjects once believed there was no possibility of revolt or serious discontent in Russia or the satellites against Moscow. Now we find the Alsops admitting their error in believing the "experts" a few years ago and conceding that now there has been at least a partial break-down of the authority of the Soviet regime — not only in the satellites but also in the Soviet Union itself. George Kennan, foremost of the "experts," doesn't join the Alsops on the mourners bench and confess error, but he suddenly perceives lots of revolts and ferment ahead, as in Poland and Hungary, against Soviet tyranny.

What has not been reported, anent this matter, is that there has been at least one "expert" who was right all along on this question. He is Eugene Lyons, one of the editors of the *Reader's Digest*, whose opinions on the menace of Red Russia and its Achilles heel have been given the silent treatment by the "liberal" crew. On December 23, 1953, HUMAN EVENTS singled out for special examination and praise a book by Lyons, *Our Secret Allies* (Duell, Sloan and Pearce, New York, $4.50). Lyons, former United Press correspondent in Russia, wrote:

"Under the surface of seemingly stable satellites, there is a boiling, seething, and ultimately irrepressible mass of resentments, furies, suicidal despairs. The crust of the Red empire is thinner and more brittle than most of us supposed. . . .

"The most serious mistake the free world can make is to assume arbitrarily that the anti-Soviet mood manifest in the satellite countries stops at the frontiers of the Soviet Union. The fact is that explosions of fury as dramatic as those in the satellite states have occurred repeatedly in Soviet Russia; that there the lava of mass disaffection is as hot and potentially explosive as in any of the Communist countries outside."

What's Happening in Our Public Schools, a two-page booklet written by Miss Rosalie Gordon, research assistant to John T. Flynn, tells how the public schools are being used to prepare children for a collectivist society. The booklet shows who is behind the program and what you can do about it. Single copies 25¢, *America's Future, Inc.*, 542 Main Street, New Rochelle, New York.

Letter from Dr. J. B. MATTHEWS, former Research Director of House Un-American Activities Committee: "HUMAN EVENTS is great. It is one publication that I read from beginning to end within minutes of its arrival."

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The Declaration of Independence opens: "When in the course of HUMAN EVENTS . . ."

FRANK C. HANIGHEN, *Editor and Publisher*
JAMES L. WICK, *Executive Publisher*
Contributing Editors: FRANK CHODOROV, M. STANTON EVANS

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Article Section

JOY TO THE WORLD

By E. MERRILL ROOT

THE JOY OF CHRISTMAS is that, as a fact in history and as a truth beyond history, God, who is the beginning of all things, comes into the world to make all things new. If we can see how Christmas makes all things new, and if we can carry that renewal into all our days, we may lift even the modern world out of its present grief and nearer to its potential glory. That is why we should enter deeply into the joy of Christmas.

Our world today worships that single dimension of time which we call "the future." We say that it is evil to turn the clock back, but good to turn the clock ahead, as if 1776 — just because it is past — must be inferior to 1984. But the function of every clock is simply to keep sidereal time. And the meaning of every hour that the clock ticks and tells lies not in its position on the line of time, but in its quality within the circle of Eternity.

No advance in time can make a knife in the heart, or the kiss of lovers under the moon, or the sweet peas that Keats saw "on tiptoe for a flight," any different from what, in their timeless essential being, they *are.* Things move through time; but they can be comprehended only *sub specie aeternitatis,* under the look of Eternity. Now, or in a million centuries from now, water is wet, and night is a pause of darkness between the dawn and sunset that frame the green earth in fire, and song is a bubble of joy from the bird's throat. Without benefit of time, fire always burns and ice always freezes; still the living likes to go on living, and the brave muskrat gnaws off the plasmic fetter of his paw in order to be free; still the buds of May lie golden in the roots of December. "Time," said Plato, "is the moving picture of Eternity." Now and forever, reality stands and abides, changeless in its own essential being, in the Eternal Now of God.

PROGRESS IN TIME, indeed, may be regress from Eternity. The greatest symbol in the world is the myth of Eden, the stark and terrible fact of the Fall. It tells of the progress in time that brings the regress from Eternity because it increases our knowledge of good and evil but decreases our wisdom about evil and good. It tells of the civilization that seeks out many inventions but forgets the Eternity that God has set in man's heart; that grows in sophistication and know-how, but loses wonder and wisdom. It is the symbol of progress toward pride of brains which give glib answers to every question and fashion flip questions for every answer.

G. K. Chesterton said of Savonarola: "The civilization which surrounded [him] on every side was a civilization that had taken the wrong turn, the turn that leads to endless inventions and no discoveries; in which the new forever grows old, but in which no old things ever grow new." Has not our civilization, likewise, taken that wrong turn, in which the new forever grows old, but in which the old never grows new? For us the Hit Parade flickers by, the New Look flashes intermittently over women's fashions and the styles of automobiles, the Book of the Month chases the book of last month into yesterday. We even try to turn the Constitution of the United States into a Hit Parade, we smarten it up with the New Look, we dilute it into the Constitution of the Month. And meanwhile dawn and sunset, the water that is always wet,

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the moon that leads the tides like shaggy hounds on her silver leash, seem to us, in our terrible phrase, "an old story" — or, in our more modern and more terrible phrase — "corny." Our novelties are born old; the ageless realities, to us, never grow new.

Thus we are sleepwalkers in Eden or under Apocalypse. And our salvation can come only from an awakening into a consciousness that has renewed its depth through a Renaissance of Wonder. As Chesterton says: "To let no bird fly past unnoticed, to spell patiently the stones and the weeds, to have the mind a storehouse of sunsets, requires a discipline in pleasure, and an education in gratitude." We need the patient depth and living sensitivity that never grow weary or callous, that refuse the sleep of apathy or the death called "adjustment," that tingle under every touch of reality. In an Egyptian temple there was once a shrine where, in a hidden nook, stood the statue of a god. And upon the wall at one side of the shrine, a priest inscribed these words: *I am he that was, and is, and ever shall be, and my veil hath no man lifted.* But upon the wall at the other side of the shrine, a wiser priest inscribed the deeper words: *Veil after veil have we lifted, and ever the face is more beautiful.*

Christmas, more than any other season or holiday, says that, as we lift the veils, we ever find the Face more beautiful. God's birthday as man is so stupendous an event that it is not only the chronological hub of history, it is like the sun that shatters the night and bids us see, for the first time, geometry and the spectrum. Here over the sleepwalkers of time falls the great daylight of Eternity. It is like a beneficent earthquake that shakes men not into crumpled disaster but into the keen sensitivity that too often only disaster brings. Even the sophisticated in a world grown old and cold and dreary — even the minds frozen by the intellectual 100 below zero of the winter of the West — are, for a season, wakened from the dead. Holly berries gleam red: the fire upon the hearth is again the old-new magic that Homer sang: the good beasts are again our simple and magical elder brothers: and we sing — and for the moment mean — "God rest ye merry, Gentlemen, let nothing you dismay." For a season at least, we turn from the abstractions that the cerebral surface-mind spins like a calamitous spider: we re-enter that imaginative reason which seizes reality as the hand of a Hungarian revolutionist seizes a rifle, or as the thirsty lips seek a cup of cold water. We see the world as a man may see it when, after death, he looks back at the beautiful lost earth and sees it *for the first time.*

HERE AT CHRISTMAS we see God's way set in stark terrible contrast to man's way. Man, wearying of the reality he is not great enough to grasp, seeks novelty in the excrescences of existence — in the spangles and gestures and pretences, in the purple of Caesar's throne and the perversion of simple joy into the complexities of pleasure, in the neon lights to supersede the sun. But God finds reality in itself forever new — in the child born amid the humble beasts and the coarse straw, where the only spangles of luxury are the simple smoking torch, the surly fire upon the bleak stone, the stars silent and far in heaven. He finds reality, too, in the shadow of His cross that already falls across His cradle.

Man's way is to diminish life by multiplying the excrescences and dividing the essence; God's way is to intensify life by subtracting the excrescences and raising the essence to the *n*th power. Man tries to paint every blackboard white, and then to write on it with carefully whitened chalk; God keeps the very heavens a somber blackboard so that He may write His tragic and joyous poems with a chalk of stars. Man seeks to live in "security," but God comes into His world to live dangerously and to die greatly.

If Pablo Picasso were God — which God forbid! — he would draw every circle square, and fashion jaguars with five tails and ten horns, and create lovers who tear each other with a crab's claws, and trees that writhe like the tentacles of a squid. This he would call "making the world new." But God keeps all things new by restoring the old things from within: He is content to renew the eagle eternally upon the roads of the wind, and the elephant in the squudgy-wudgy creek, and the fishes that (as Saint Francis said) "alone were saved in the

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Flood." He renews forever the eternal miracle of the sky that is blue, the breath that we draw for antidote to death, the child that is born in the old way through the door of love and pain. God knows that not the outward event but the inward renewal makes all things new. When a man enters the consciousness of God, he knows that tomorrow's sunrise, which is the oldest thing in all the world, is the youngest thing he can ever see. He knows

> In colors of such simple creed
> All things [spring] at him, sun and weed,
> Till the grass [grows] to be grass indeed
> And the tree [is] a tree at last.

He comes, a Wise Man, to the Child of Bethlehem.

The mystic sin by which creation fell *is the sin of getting used to things.* Only the strong and brave, only the marathon runners through the days of their years, never get used to things. To them tomorrow's sunrise is still the primal bugle of color that shattered the ancient night with reveille; the last kiss is ever more magical than the first; a crust of bread is wonder and sacrament. True conservatism is not a "settling down" into the *status quo* (the state-in-which) of the clam, or the social security of the oyster. It is, rather, the *potentia qua* (the power-from-which) of the saint, the poet, and the hero. It is a drawing up, from the primal sources, of the power from which flow the suns and the planets, the mysterious pale berries of the mistletoe, the April tulips that blow their bubbles of fire and gold. To refuse the "normal adjustment," to prevent the callousing and coarsening of consciousness, to hold the spirit from the sleep of complacency, to preserve the heart and senses tremulous to wonder and surprises, sensitive to ecstasy and agony . . . is to make the heart the manger of Bethlehem where the eternal Christ is born. It is also to lay before the Christ, like the Wise Men, the frankincense, the gold, the myrrh — and to receive from Him, in that giving, the old fragrance of lilacs made new, the old gold of the sun become a new glory. Then the tiger (or the tabby cat) burns bright from the anvil of God: the lamb leaps like quadruped popcorn: and (with Blake) we find, in every grain of sand, a world. Joy to the world, the Christ is born!

Some moderns, from Dickens to Saroyan, know the secret of the Christmas consciousness. In *The Human Comedy* Saroyan writes of little Ulysses Macauley, finding a simple egg in a California hen house: "He looked at it a moment, picked it up, brought it to his mother and very carefully handed it to her, by which he meant what no man can guess and no child can remember to tell."

At Christmas we know what no man can guess and no child can remember to tell. Veil after veil is lifted — the veils of habit, custom, fashion — the veils of getting used to things. Then soberly we know that it is our eyes that make us blind, our ears that make us deaf, our brains that make us dull, our lives which make us dead. And, weary of being Wise Guys, we become . . . for a season . . . the Wise Men who follow a star.

Christmas makes all things new — and young. Nineteen hundred and fifty-six years have passed since the wedge of God split history into a Before and After; yet Christmas is still the youngest season in all the world. Still the songs and carols bid the faithful to come, joyful and triumphant; and still, despite ourselves, even we unfaithful, triumphant and joyful, come. The Wise Men still follow a star that is not of this world, and only so come at last to the heart of the world. Still even the Children of the Wasteland hear the tidings of great joy, and forget for a season "the rats' feet over broken glass" in the "dry cellar." Still the shepherds, who too often think of the fleeces more than the flock, forget the market or the wage and kneel before the only Good Shepherd. For a season, the Josephs of the world, the carpenters of houses made with hands and of the Towers of Babel, bow in adoration before the Carpenter of Heaven. Still Herod, sensing that the Lord of Eternity has come to judge the lords of time, draws the streamlined sword to liquidate the terrible God whom his heart hates even while his lips deny. Still the mothers of men are made holier in the Mary who is the Mother of God. For a season, even in the loss and lapse called time, the world transcends time in the newborn Child who is to say: *Before Abraham was, I am.*

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Christmas, like the dawn, forever *is*. Dawn stands in changeless glory above the world: earth makes her own night, as now Asia, now Europe, now America, reaches up to snatch in turn at the inexhaustible morning that none can hold. But dawn abides, though earth fails to hold it; and even so Christmas abides ever, though the day passes and the weak world forgets. For Christmas is the dawn of Eternity upon time, of God upon man.

But how different the dawns of man! Man proclaims his little synthetic dawns, his artificial salavations, his supercharged panaceas of human power. The most terrible, because the most conscious and resolute, of all these neon dawns came only some thirty-eight years ago. Less than forty years have passed, yet that dawn is already a bitter old and wrinkled hag . . . a dawn with syphilis. When its birthday came this year, a few men celebrated it in blindness or hyprocrisy; but meanwhile the guns blew children and women into bloody rags, the tanks crunched over bodies of workers and students, the trains bore the free and the brave to the living tomb of Siberian night.

And still, as during the last three decades, the slave camps of the Arctic held the forgotten men of freedom, the creatures that once were men. That synthetic and neon dawn of man's kingdom is the true City of Dreadful Night of which James Thomson prophetically wrote:

> *As if a blacker night could dawn on night,*
> *With tenfold gloom on moonless night unstarred.*

They who enter that city abandon all hope . . . unless, in the infinite mercy of God, their hearts are cloven and, beyond the inn where there was no room, they find the manger, and the Mother, and the Child who is God.

AND THEY AND WE together — all of us human-all-too-human, all of us the sad children of the world *who get used to things* and some of us the proud children of the world who substitute the neon for the sun — can follow the star, can find the manger, can kneel before the Child. And we, like the Kings of Orient, can give our gifts to that Child. But they must not be the gifts that the Kings of Orient gave: they gave spices, and gold, and perfume — the rich and beautiful treasures of the earth. But what need has God of gold, who made the gold of the sun . . . or of perfume, who fashioned the lilac and the rose? Even to give Him our love, great and right as that is, is not enough: is He not Himself the Love that moves the sun in heaven and all the stars? No, by strange terrible paradox, the best gifts that man can give to God are the worst things in man: to give up, to Him, the lust of the flesh and the pride of the eye, the arrogance, the cruelty, the apathy, *the evil.* God asks that we give to Him the worst things within us, for He alone can change them into the best things. To Him who is Love we may give up our hate; to Him who is compassion we may give up our merciless hearts; to Him who is joy we may give up our sick melancholy. But, most of all, we should pray:

"Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name! Take from us, as the greatest gift that we can give, our cleverness, our sophistication, our souls that make the world an Inn where all new things grow suddenly old but where no old things ever grow new. Take from us the gift that is hardest for us to give, that is most blessed for Thee to take, the gift of the sin that wrecked Lucifer and his Angels: our pride of intellect. Restore to us the blackboard of humility, that on it we may write Thy poems with a chalk of suns." If we pray that prayer and mean it, we may hear the Angels sing in every hour: *Joy to the World!*

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E. Merrill Root is Professor of English at Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana, and author of six books of poetry. He has also written widely on political and philosophical subjects. His most recent book is *Collectivism on the Campus* (Devin-Adair; $5).

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